



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN MEETS WITH TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

Last week, SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman had the opportunity to meet with Tribal Veterans Service Officers and SDDTR Secretary J.R. LaPlante while in Pierre.

"These meetings afford us the opportunity to discuss ways to grow the outreach programs," said Secretary Zimmerman. "This setting also allows me to hear first-hand the issues and challenges that tribal veterans are facing."

Secretary LaPlante and Secretary Zimmerman plan for this group to continue to meet on a quarterly basis.

Secretary Zimmerman said he appreciates the time that these leaders are dedicating to ongoing discussions.



Inside this issue:

Veterans Commission	2
Wilcox Announces Retirement	2
SD Guard Engineers Build Partnership with UK Soldiers	3
SD Guard Unit Fine-Tunes Deployment Preparation	4
Cabela's Hometown Heroes Celebration	5
JC Penney's "Here's to our Heroes" Program	5
Upcoming Events	6



"Working together, we will reach South Dakota's 75,000 veterans.," said Zimmerman.

VETERANS COMMISSION MEETS

The South Dakota Veterans Commission met in Pierre this week.

Secretary Zimmerman provided the Commission with an update on the Department's reorganization structure, the Department's new website, goal of reaching out to South Dakota's 75,000 veterans and the Department's goal to grow their outreach programs.

Secretary Zimmerman provided the Commission with an update on the State Veterans Home. The Commission discussed in great length the challenges facing occupancy. Commissioners discussed legislative issues, the VA's backlog with regard to compensation claims, state veterans cemetery, impact federal shutdown had on the filing of claims at the federal level, the makeup of the Commission and the role of the Commission.

Wade Hubbard, Pierre, was elected chairman (effective January 2014) and Mike Birnbaum, Rapid City, was elected vice chairman.

The Commission's next meeting will be a conference call on December 4.

The Commission thanked the SD Department of Veterans Affairs Claims Office staff for their commitment to South Dakota's veterans and for the extra work they put in to assist with brokering of the claims the VA's Regional Office was handling.

WILCOX ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Larry Wilcox, superintendent at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, today announced he plans to retire on Nov. 14 of this year. Larry was named superintendent of the State Veterans Home by Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman in May 2004.

"Wilcox, a Gulf War era veteran with over 38 years of service to his country has been a great advocate for South Dakota's veterans and their families," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "We wish Larry the best in his retirement endeavors and thank him for his service to this great country and to our veterans."

A retirement coffee will be held in Larry's honor on Thursday, Nov 14, from 10 a.m. to noon (MT).



SD GUARD ENGINEERS BUILD PARTNERSHIP WITH UK SOLDIERS

South Dakota National Guardsmen are building a partnership with soldiers from the United Kingdom. Forty Guardsmen traveled to Great Britain Sept. 13-28 to participate in the Army National Guard's Reciprocal Unit Exchange Program (RUE), where they had the opportunity to work with a foreign military.

Operating alongside U.K. regular Army and Territorial Army soldiers (Britain's equivalent of a National Guard force), the Guardsmen trained on their vertical-engineering skills during the construction of a viewing walkway in northern Scotland's Highland Wildlife Park. The goal of the RUE program is to gain an understanding of the training, doctrine and operations of a major alliance partner.

"It is both a cultural and doctrinal program, as it affords U.S. soldiers an opportunity to learn from our NATO partners," said Col. Tim Moran, state training officer for the SDNG. "It prepares our leaders and soldiers to fully utilize troop leading procedures as they prepare for a deployment to a foreign country, ensure mission accomplishment and maintain the safety and accountability of their team."

Reciprocal unit exchanges involve the mutual exchange of company-size or smaller National Guard elements with designated units from foreign nations. The program is designed to improve participant knowledge of organization, equipment, structure and operational doctrine of the nation's reserve forces. Selected units perform the exchange in an annual training status.

Soldiers from the 153rd Engineer Battalion spent their two-week annual training working with British engineers from the 71 Engineer Regiment, where they constructed a 150 meter-long, two meter-wide viewing walkway for the park.

This project not only provides a benefit in enhancing work skills and coordination with a foreign military, but also provides a useful service to the public.

This most recent exchange with Great Britain is just one of several in the past two years with the SDNG.

In September 2012, 38 engineers from the 211th Engineer Company members traveled to Germany to train with New Castle, England's 72 Engineer Regiment in the exercise Tyne Sapper 12. In June, about 50 members of the 72nd also participated in the SDNG's annual Golden Coyote training exercise held in the Black Hills. The SDNG has also held several other reciprocal unit exchanges with military forces from Germany and Denmark.

"From an interoperability aspect, it is a valuable experience for our soldiers to be able to work alongside international soldiers – to learn their tactics and techniques, which differ slightly from ours," said Moran. "It may mean life or death during a future overseas contingency operation."

The ARNG annually executes RUEs with the United Kingdom and other European nations using Department of the Army Memorandums of Understanding currently in place with each country as the legal authority to execute. The program also supports the Secretary of Defense Security Cooperation Guidance and the Theater Security Cooperation Plan with each respective country.



SD GUARD UNIT FINE-TUNES DEPLOYMENT PREPARATION

A South Dakota Army National Guard unit spent two and a half weeks conducting premobilization training at Fort McCoy in preparation for its overseas deployment later this year.

The 1742nd Transportation Company of Sioux Falls, with a detachment in Flandreau, completed a wide variety of training in early October, said Maj. James Linn of the South Dakota Army National Guard Premobilization Training Assistor Element.

Unit members conducted convoy training, entry control point (ECP) training, combat life saver (CLS) training, land navigation and training with individual and crew-served weapons, he said.

"The support we've received from everyone at Fort McCoy to make our

training successful has been top-notch," Linn said. "The Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security has provided us with whatever additional training opportunities they can, as well to ensure our training helps us accomplish the mission."

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hawks, a team leader for the 1742nd, said the ECP training was exceptional. "It helps us know what to look for, who to let in or keep out and is great training for the soldiers," Hawks said. "Some of them are right out of AIT (Advanced Individual Training) so they only have seen this information in books or in the classroom. This lets them see how it works."

Hawks said even though he had previously deployed he continued to learn new skills during this training.

Sgt. Paul McKinstry, a truck driver for the 1742nd, said "the ECP training taught the unit the standard procedures and how to perform when manning an ECP." "We can stop and talk about it," he said. "The

combat life saver training at the Medical Simulation Training Center also was well presented. It was good they made it life-like. The simulation was unbelievable, and the best way to learn was to put the skills into action."

Pfc. Danika Johnson, a refueler/maintenance soldier who joined the unit from the 740th Transportation Company, said the unit members helped her fit right in.

"This is my first drill on this since basic training," Johnson said. "They're making everything more realistic, and helping me get up to speed quickly."

Sgt. 1st Class Joel Marotz, an assistant truck master for the 1742nd, said the soldiers conducted weapons training with a variety of crew-served and individual weapons, such as the MK-19 grenade launcher. Soldiers trained in a mounted and dismounted state with the weapon. "The CLS training was awesome," he said "The goal is to have everyone 100 percent trained in this. This is the first time in (my) 25 years (career) I have trained at Fort McCoy. The facilities here are top-notch."

Linn said "the South Dakota National Guard appreciates coming to Fort McCoy for training and members of the 1742nd will complete their mobilization training at one of the Army's mobilization stations later this year before deploying."



CABELA'S HONOR HOMETOWN HEROES

Cabela's stores nationwide will honor the contributions of those who serve our country and communities by offering employee pricing to all veterans, active duty military and reserves, law enforcement, firefighters, and EMS personnel beginning Monday November 11th and Tuesday November 12th. The Hometown Heroes event recognizes the service and sacrifice of those who protect and serve every day.

"Cabela's values the contributions of our nation's military and service personnel," said Cabela's Chief Executive Officer Tommy Millner. "Making them honorary employees, and extending our employee discount to them as we prepare to celebrate Veterans Day, is our way of saying thank you for keeping us safe."

To participate in the Hometown Heroes event, veterans, active duty military, reserves, law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel should present their service ID at check out at their local Cabela's store. Upon doing so, they will receive Cabela's employee discount on virtually everything in the store. Some restrictions apply; see store for complete details.

For more information, please contact Jen Johnston, Retail Marketing Specialist at 605-995-4476. Cabela's is located off I-90 exit 332 in Mitchell.



HERE'S TO OUR HEROES

As Veteran's Day fast approaches, I am reaching out to you on behalf of JCPenney to extend Veteran's across the nation a special Veteran's Day offer to help honor our heroes. Please see below for details surrounding what JCPenney has to offer our Veterans this season and please share the attached coupon with all.

This year, JCPenney salutes all current and former military personnel and their families with a special discount to say "thank you for your service." Veterans and their family members can enjoy an extra 20% off on purchases in-store (some exclusions may apply) from November 6-11 by presenting a military ID or proof of service.

To follow and be part of the social conversation, tweet or Instagram the hashtag #ThanksVets. The coupon is also available online at jcp.com/military.



Upcoming Events

2013

Nov. 9—Deadwood Veterans Salute

Nov. 16—Shrine of Democracy Chorus and the Abbey Road Band—Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn

Nov. 18—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—DAV Headquarters in Sioux Falls—10:00 am

Dec. 14—Wreaths Across America Ceremony Wildwood Mausoleum at the Hills of Rest Memorial Park—300 N. Chapel Hill Road—Sioux Falls—11:00

Dec. 14—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—10:00 am

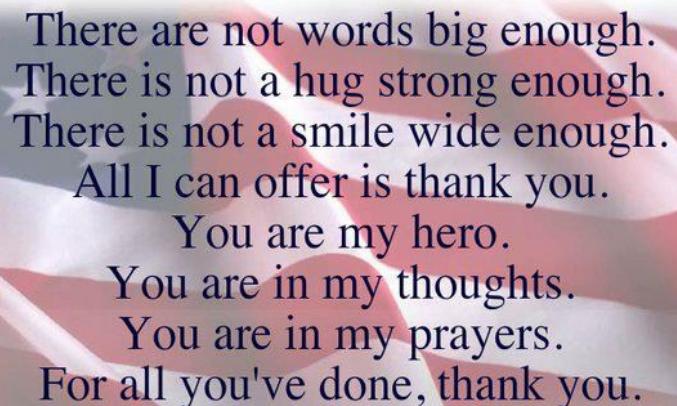
2014

Jan. 25-26- 235th MP Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Chamberlain Cedar Shore Resort

Jan. 31—SD Veterans Council Breakfast with Legislators—6:30 am

Feb. 8- 129th MPAD Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Rapid City

Feb 15-16- 152nd Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Sioux Falls



There are not words big enough.
There is not a hug strong enough.
There is not a smile wide enough.
All I can offer is thank you.
You are my hero.
You are in my thoughts.
You are in my prayers.
For all you've done, thank you.

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
South Dakota Department of the Military <http://mva.sd.gov>
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
Soldiers and Sailors Building
425 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-8242
E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

